

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director*



Contact:
Jim Menard, Area Management Biologist
Scott M. Kent, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 443-5167
Fax: (907) 443-5893

Nome Area Office
P.O. Box 1148
Nome, Alaska 99762
Date Issued: 8/28/2012
Time: 4:15 p.m.

FISHING PERIODS INCREASED IN SHAKTOOLIK AND UNALAKLEET

Commercial salmon fishing is being extended in Norton Sound Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts beginning 6:00 p.m. this evening. Both the August 26th and August 29th 48-hour openings for Subdistricts 5 and 6 are being extended for an additional 24 hours each. This action effectively merges an August 26th 72-hour opener with an August 29th 72-hour opener to create a single 144-hour commercial fishing period. Permit holders in Subdistricts 5 and 6 are limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length with set gillnets that have a stretched-mesh size no greater than 6 inches. Following this super period, commercial salmon fishing in Subdistricts 5 and 6 will resume on a schedule of two 48-hour periods per week until the season closes by regulation at 6:00 p.m. Friday, September 7.

This extended commercial fishing period directed at silver salmon is warranted in southern Norton Sound based on sufficient escapements and severe weather that has greatly reduced the amount of commercial fishing effort during the month of August. Before the North River tower project was flooded out, silver salmon escapement to the North River based on tower counts was projected to easily exceed the upper end of the aerial survey SEG range of 550-1,100 silver salmon. Additionally, Unalakleet River drainagewide escapement projections as of mid-August ranged from 40,000-75,000 silvers based on tower and weir counts and historical radiotelemetry data. This level of inriver abundance will easily provide for subsistence uses of silver salmon and silver salmon escapement needs throughout the Unalakleet River drainage. Apportioned sonar counts from the Shaktoolik River sonar project operated by NSEDC result in a current escapement estimate of over 10,000 silvers.

Considering the current weather patterns and forecast, this super period will provide flexibility for the buyer and fishermen to efficiently target silver salmon surpluses from the tail end of the run without jeopardizing escapement and subsistence needs. Weather is expected to continue hampering fishing effort and allow late run silver salmon to reach the spawning grounds in good numbers.

Good Luck, Good Fishing, and be safe.